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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS

LATIN AMERICAN NEWS DIGEST*

No. 530

March 3, 1944

IMPORTS FROM LATIN AMERICA MOUNTING. At the present time, U.S. imports from Latin America total approximately \$500,000,000 more than the exports. Purchases of metals and other raw materials, together with new developments in rubber, fibers, quinine, etc., formerly imported from outside the Western Hemisphere, are largely responsible for the increase. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

MAR 24 1944

IRON ORE FROM BRAZIL FOR UNITED NATIONS. The world's largest iron ore deposit will be opened this year in Brazil. The Caue Peak area is easy to develop, equip, and mine. The 350-mile railroad from Itabira, location of the mine, to the Atlantic seaport Victoria is being restored for transporting the ore. Beginning this year and continuing for 3 years, annual production--estimated at 1,500,000 tons of ore--will be divided between the U.S. and Great Britain. (Washington Post)

CHILE IMPROVING FISHING INDUSTRY. An expenditure of about \$356,000 has been approved in Chile for the improvement of the domestic fishing industry. A total of 22,000,000 pounds of fish was taken during the first 11 months of 1943, an increase of 20 percent. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

MEXICAN FEDERAL BANK REPORT URGES LUXURY-IMPORT CURB. Total exports from Mexico in 1943 were reported by the Banco de Mexico (Federal Bank) as \$213,900,000, compared with \$138,300,000 in 1942. Of this total, agricultural exports were valued at \$65,000,000, compared with \$41,100,000 in 1942. Exportations of minerals, although in 1943 the highest in Mexico's history, are now declining. To meet the expected post-war decrease in foreign demands for raw and strategic materials, and to protect Mexico's home industries, the report suggested restrictions on the importation of luxury articles and other goods manufactured in the U.S. that might be in competition with those produced in Mexico. The joint U.S.-Mexico Committee of Economic Cooperation was praised for its help in obtaining some badly needed machinery. Mexico's great needs were stated to be equipment, more electric power, and more adequate transportation by rail and truck. (New York Times)

FARM MACHINERY ARRIVES IN MEXICO. U.S.-made agricultural machinery valued at \$4,000,000 has recently been received in Mexico. (New York Times)

MEXICAN FREIGHT EMBARGO SUSPENDED. The Association of American Railroads has lifted the embargo on carload shipments to Mexico from all points in the U.S. and Canada. This probably indicates that rail cars are being returned to service more promptly than they were last year. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

REPORT ON NICARAGUAN EXPERIMENT GIVEN. A report brought from the east coast of Nicaragua to Managua states that at El Recreo 500,000 rubber trees are ready to be transplanted on individual plantations. Experiments are also under way with hemp and other tropical products in one of the most important agricultural projects ever undertaken for Nicaragua. Work is being done by the Director of Technical Agriculture of Nicaragua and a commission of experts from the U.S. Department of Agriculture to help the east coast become self-sustaining. (New York Times)

PANAMA HAS NEW HEMP-PROCESSING PLANT. A million-dollar plant for drying and defibrating hemp has been completed at Changuinola in the Province of Bocas del Toro and will be placed in operation at an early date. About 6,000 acres of hemp have been planted in banana lands abandoned because of sigatoca disease. (New York Times)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS
LATIN AMERICAN NEWS DIGEST*

No. 531

March 10, 1944

NEW RUBBER AGREEMENTS WITH OTHER LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES UNDER WAY. Negotiations are under way for agreements whereby Peru, Colombia, and Ecuador would take over from the U. S. the financing of their wild-rubber production for a one-third increase in price. The agreements would follow the pattern of the one made with Brazil, if increases in production costs in the three countries are found to be great enough to warrant payment of a premium. (Washington Evening Star)

INDIAN INSTITUTE IMPROVES CENTRAL AMERICAN DIETS. Five Central American countries have ratified the Patzcuaro Convention of 1940, which set up the Inter-American Indian Institute, and through this agency are carrying on educational and welfare work. In El Salvador one of the first projects was the introduction of soybeans into the diet of the Indians. The addition of soybean meal to the tortilla meal is said to add greatly to the nutritive value without affecting the taste of the tortillas. (Christian Science Monitor)

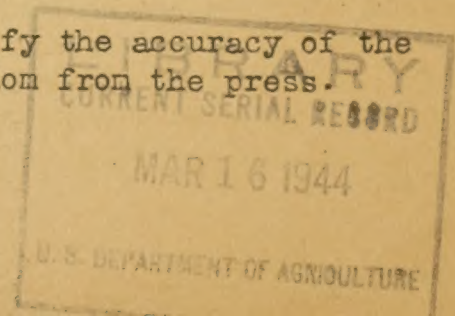
FOUNDATION FOR SUGAR RESEARCH APPLAUDED. Since the welfare of many Pan American countries depends in large measure on the demand for sugar in the world markets, the organization of the Sugar Research Foundation is hailed as "a significant development in the field of international economic relations." The foundation, whose research program is supported by the sugar industries of continental U.S., Hawaii, and Puerto Rico, announces that at its recent annual meeting twelve Puerto Rican sugar producers, four Louisiana producers, eight Cuban sugar refiners, and the National Mill Owners' Association and Cane Planters' Association, representing the entire Cuban raw sugar industry, were elected to membership. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

PRICE "RACKET" IN BRAZIL TO BE CONTROLLED. Taking advantage of the war situation, some Brazilian importers of U.S. products have been increasing prices on goods which are covered by ceiling prices in the U.S. The importers claim that the North Americans are increasing the price and thus they demand higher prices. Brazil's Price Administrator for Domestic Production promised control of the racket in the near future. (New York Times)

U. S. TOWBOATS BEING USED ON AMAZON. U.S.-built towboats are doing valuable service on the Amazon River. Since their draft is less than 36 inches, the boats can navigate streams no more than waist-deep. Two 100-horsepower Diesel engines enable them to haul 2,000 tons of freight at 3 miles an hour in still water, 1,000 tons at 5 miles, and 600 tons at 7 miles an hour. They are set on flat-bottomed scows, measure only 50 by 13 feet, and have a flat, vertical bow, like the combination ramp-bow of the Army and Navy landing craft, to serve as a pusher when nosed into the stern of a river barge. One of these tugs can tow a score of 100-ton barges. At present the towboats are hauling loads of oil for transfer to ocean steamers, while smaller tugs--10 to 40 feet--are collecting barge loads of rubber and are useful in mining and industrial operations. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

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COFFEE ARRIVING FROM BRAZIL. The arrival of three or four Brazilian boats at Eastern and Gulf ports is reported. This brings the number of total cargoes of Brazilian coffee for the past week or 10 days to around 13 or 14 boats. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

MEAT SHORTAGE IN HAVANA UNLESS PRICE RAISED. Unless the Cuban Government permits a price rise agreed on last September to take effect in March, packing-house officials predict that Havana will be beefless. The price of cattle on the hoof was raised to 5 cents a pound on March 1, but the packing houses were ordered to continue to sell dressed meat at the old price, meaning an average loss of some \$2.50 a head. Retail prices were raised last January, but the public opposes a further increase. The packing companies state that they cannot operate on their present margin and that no more cattle will be purchased. (New York Times)

MEXICO PLANNING LARGE IRRIGATION PROJECT. Mexico plans to spend more than \$16,000,000 on its irrigation program this year to bring new land under cultivation. The program involves irrigation of 260,000 acres. (Christian Science Monitor)

MEXICO IS LAND "OF VAST POST-WAR PROMISE." A U.S. wool merchant recently returned from Mexico states that it takes only \$1 to \$1.50 worth of land to raise one sheep in Mexico, against \$19 to \$25 worth of land in Australia and \$25 to \$40 in the U.S. Cattle can be raised on the tablelands of Mexico, he states, for \$1.50 a head per year against \$15 to \$25 per head in the U.S., and similar labor can be secured in Mexico for 40 cents to \$1 a day against \$7 a day in Cambridge, Mass. (Christian Science Monitor)

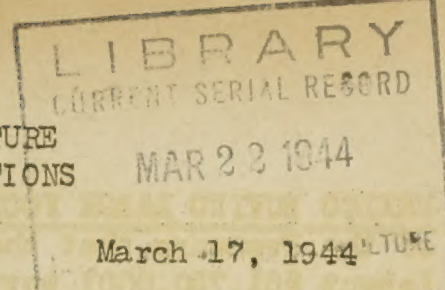
PERU PRODUCING MANY CIGARETTES. During 1943 the Estanco del Tabaco of Lima produced an average of 6,000,000 cigarettes daily. Tobacco is brought to Lima from the producing zones of Tumbes, Jaén, and Tarapoto in northern Peru and Tingo Maria to the east. A relatively small amount of tobacco is also imported from the U.S. and Cuba for the manufacture of Kentucky, Virginia, Oriental, and Cuban types of cigarettes. (Export Trade and Shipper)

POTATOES AND COFFEE FOR PUERTO RICO THROUGH IMPROVED SHIPPING. Allocation of shipping space for the importation of potatoes and coffee to Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands by private importing channels has been authorized by the Division of Territories and Island Possessions of the Department of the Interior. Although starchy vegetables, such as sweetpotatoes, yams, yautias, and plantains, which can be used as substitutes, are native to Puerto Rico, the importation of potatoes from the mainland seems desirable. Branded coffee in small packages is also desired. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

DEMONSTRATIONS OF SOYBEANS BEING HELD IN PUERTO RICO. The addition of soybeans to the diet of Puerto Ricans is being encouraged by demonstrations of uses for soybeans conducted this week by the San Juan-Santurce Nutrition Committee in principal grocery stores in Puerto Rico. (N.Y. Journal of Commerce)

CONFERENCES ON INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT TO BE HELD IN MAY. The Inter-American Development Commission is scheduled to meet in New York May 9 to discuss means of stimulating the post-war economic development of Western Hemisphere countries. The conferences will continue for 9 days and will be attended by representatives of the 21 American Republics. (New York Times)

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
OFFICE OF FOREIGN AGRICULTURAL RELATIONS

LATIN AMERICAN NEWS DIGEST* A

No. 532

March 17, 1944

JUTE AS A WAR MATERIAL EXHIBITED IN BRITAIN. In an effort to convince jute workers that their services are important in the war effort, the various uses of jute are being shown in a mobile exhibition that will tour British factories working on the fiber. (N. Y. Journal of Commerce)

BRAZIL PROHIBITS EXPORTATION OF PENICILLIN. The manufacture of penicillin has been placed under Government supervision and its export prohibited by President Getulio Vargas. Recently a large consignment was found at Rio Grande do Sul on an airplane bound for Argentina. Brazil has been sending penicillin to Spain, the U. S., and Great Britain. The Brazilian Government has voted \$200,000 to increase production of the drug in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. (New York Times)

BRAZIL TO PRODUCE MORE WAX. The prediction is that Brazil will have 50 more tons of carnauba wax in 1944 than in 1943. Some 40 tons are held in stock now in Bahia. (New York Journal of Commerce)

CANADA EXPERIMENTING WITH FROTH-FLOTATION METHOD FOR RUBBER AND RESINS. A new method of bubble-floating rubber and resins out of the mashed pulp of milkweed, dogbane, goatsbeard, sow-thistle, wild lettuce, and possibly many other plants, has been developed, on an experimental scale only, by three Canadian scientists. By this method no additional chemical reagents are required. Air in the form of fine bubbles is introduced into the mixture of ground plant material which is being subjected to agitation in a mechanical or pneumatic flotation cell. The bubbles attach themselves to the rubber-resin particles and carry them to the top of the mixture. The froth can then be removed. (New York Times)

LIQUOR EXPORTS TO U. S. CURBED BY CUBA. The Cuban Government has suspended the export of beverage alcohol to the U. S. until a quota system for its producers can be worked out. This action is not an embargo against exports to the U. S. but is an attempt to bring about a more equal share in the export quotas among Cuban producers. (N. Y. Journal of Commerce)

CUBAN-AMERICAN SUGAR MILL SOLD. The sugar mill at Tinguaro, which was taken over by the Cuban Government last October from the Cuban American Sugar Company, was sold recently. The Government's action was taken to insure the return of the mill to a condition of repair, after damage caused by fire, so that Cuban workers might again have employment there. The purchasers are a group of Cubans, headed by Julio Lobo. They are paying the \$250,000 which the Government had spent in repairing the damage caused by the fire. (New York Times)

FURNITURE FROM MEXICO. Furniture from Mexico is now coming into the U. S. in sufficient quantities to be on display in New York stores. It is all of primavera, a Mexican hardwood, in a blond finish which makes a "nice foil" for the bright colorings of the Mexican accessories. Primavera is sometimes called white mahogany. (New York Times)

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MEXICO BUYING LARGE FOOD SUPPLIES. Announcement comes from the Mexican Secretary of the Treasury that the Mexican Government has purchased 300,000,000 pesos (about \$61,750,000) worth of essential goods abroad, as a means of fighting rising prices and the flourishing black market. The purchases include 180,000 tons of corn and 20,000,000 pounds of lard from the U. S.; 17,000,000 bushels of wheat from the U. S., Canada, and Australia; and 70,000 tons of sugar from abroad. The present purchases were made necessary by this year's poor crops in Mexico. (New York Times)

MEXICO EXPANDING AIR TRANSPORT FACILITIES. Air transport development in Mexico has been stepped up rapidly during recent months. A new airport, said to be twice as large as La Guardia Field, is under construction near Mexico City. Estimates are that the passenger and freight terminals will be adequate to handle 1,000 passengers, 24 tons of baggage, and 20 tons of air express an hour. The latest list of Mexican airlines (September) showed 27 airlines, and a number have been added since. The tendency of U. S. airline companies to operate subsidiary companies in Mexico is "leading to the belief that this may work out as a means for building up transcontinental air routes by establishing service from border to border of several countries." (N. Y. Journal of Commerce)

MEXICAN VANILLA BEANS SHIPPING DATE CHANGED. The Mexican crop of vanilla beans is about completed. Unfavorable weather has greatly reduced the crop. Government regulation has changed the shipping date of cut beans from March 15 to March 1; whole beans are to be shipped a month later. (N. Y. Journal of Commerce)

NICARAGUAN EAST COAST AGRICULTURE SUFFERING. Because of the higher wages and better food furnished by the Rubber Development Corporation, the farmers on the east coast of Nicaragua are leaving the farms to work on rubber. Corn, which was one of the chief products of the region, is no longer being raised; it sells for 40 centavos (8 cents) per pound, the same price as flour. Farmers are, however, being advised to raise more foodstuffs, rather than live on imported products, in preparation for the time when rubber development ceases. Rubber production from the east coast is reported to be running 25 percent ahead of the record for 1943. (New York Times)

PUERTO RICAN SUGAR NEGOTIATIONS OPEN. Negotiations for purchase of the 1944-45 sugar crop by the Commodity Credit Corporation are being opened this week with representatives of the Puerto Rican sugar-producing industry. "Some incentive payment to the mills, to cover higher labor and other operating costs, is expected." (N. Y. Journal of Commerce)

NEW NAME AND NEW PRICE FOR CUBAN AND MEXICAN GIN. Gin, which has recently been imported from Cuba and Mexico in the quantity of 2,000,000 gallons, is not gin, the Alcohol Tax Unit and the Bureau of Customs have decided, but "distilled spirits made from cane products and flavored with aromatics." The new base prices, which are effective March 16, are \$1.23 a proof gallon for the Cuban product and \$1.38 for the Mexican. "For the Mexican importation a differential of 15 cents a proof gallon now in effect on gin is maintained, while the new prices are approximately \$1.32 per case of fifths less than the imported Cuban gin price." (Washington Evening Star)

PAN AMERICAN DAY TO BE OBSERVED. Pan American Day will be observed on April 14 by all the American countries. The theme is "The Peoples of America: United for Victory Today; United for Peace Tomorrow." In keeping with the practice of former years, the Pan American Union offers to colleges, clubs, commercial associations, and other interested groups material for programs. (The Journal of Commerce)

EXPERIMENTING ON DEHYDRATION OF GUAVAS. Special research into the processing of guavas, with special attention to dehydration, is reported as under way at the University of California, Berkeley, Calif. The guava is rich in vitamins C, A, and B, as well as iron. Very little of the vitamin C is lost in the process of stewing, and the fruit is used for making jelly and sherbet and for drinks or fruit butter when blended with other fruits. (The Journal of Commerce)

CONTROLS ON SOME EXPORTS TO LATIN AMERICA EASED. The Foreign Economic Administrator has announced that exporters will no longer be required to show an "import recommendation" for a specified list of manufactured articles. The move is an attempt "to bring exporter and importer in closer contact with each other." The countries involved are Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cuba, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Ecuador, Guatemala, Haiti, Honduras, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela. (New York Times)

TOADS FROM ARGENTINA TO FIGHT SUGAR PARASITES. A colony of 70 toads, of the Bufo arenarum species, has come by Pan American clipper from the Argentine Agricultural Experiment Station at Tucumán, to aid the U. S. Sugar Corporation in its battle against sugarcane parasites in this country. The toads are said to be scientifically bred for the destruction of parasites and continue their work even though gorged on sugarcane juices. (Washington Post)

BRAZIL TO SEND RICE TO UNITED NATIONS In accordance with a recent rice agreement between the U. S. and Brazil, the 5,000,000 bags of rice that are in Rio de Janeiro ready for export will be shipped, probably to Great Britain for use by Hindu troops. (New York Times)

SIX LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES HOLD CONFERENCE IN COLOMBIA. Representatives of co-operatives in six Latin America countries met in Popayan, Colombia, recently. At the conference, which continued for a week, the members discussed training for co-operative leadership for the Latin American movement, aid to devastated cooperatives of Europe, and closer relations with the Cooperative Alliance in London. The Bolívar Cooperative Union was formed, which will be given final recognition, no doubt, at a conference to be held in December at Caracas, Venezuela. At that time the organization's name may be changed to Cooperative Union of Latin America. The six republics participating in the Colombian conference were Colombia, Cuba, Ecuador, Panama, Peru, and Venezuela. (The Journal of Commerce)

BEEF FAMINE IN CUBA BROKEN. Havana has a limited quantity of beef after 8 days of extreme shortage. The controversy over prices was settled by the Government's granting a small increase in price to the meat companies. (New York Times)

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CUBA OBJECTING TO U.S. TREATMENT UNDER MOLASSES AGREEMENT. Cubans are voicing strong protests against alleged "breaches" on the part of the U. S. in failing to hold to the agreement made for regulation of the molasses and alcohol importation; First, by setting curbs only on cane-producing areas, and not including Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands, on the grounds that those islands are U. S. territories; second, by failing to adhere to the agreement that so long as the ban on Cuban spirits was effective, U. S. distilleries could not convert to the production of alcoholic beverages. The Cuban Government is reported to be preparing strong protests to the Department of State. (The Journal of Commerce)

ECUADOR INCREASES EXPORT TAX ON COFFEE. Ecuador has superimposed a new duty on each bag of 101.2 pounds of coffee exported, making the total duty about 16 cents a bag. The revenue derived from the new duty is to be used to finance a food subsidy program in an endeavor to meet a shortage of various foodstuffs. (The Journal of Commerce)

MEXICO SEEKING EXPANSION OF ITS OIL PRODUCTION. Ambassador George S. Messersmith spoke recently of Mexico's part in the war effort. The country is particularly eager to expand its oil production through exploration for new sources of supply and has asked the cooperation of the U. S. in furnishing technicians and experienced geologists. The two countries have entered an agreement through which the appropriate materials will be made available for the rehabilitation of Mexican refineries, for increasing the capacity of the pipeline from Poza Rica to Mexico City, and for the erection of a high octane gasoline plant in Mexico City, with a capacity of 1,000 barrels daily. (New York Times)

NICARAGUA BREAKS SALT HOARDING. The Nicaraguan Government has purchased 200 tons of salt in an attempt to break the cornering of the salt market planned by speculators. When the Government purchase was known, the price of salt fell from 7 cents a pound to 5 cents, and subsequently fell 1 cent more. (New York Times)

NICARAGUAN COFFEE GROWERS PROTEST PRICE. The majority of coffee growers in Nicaragua are said to find it impossible to pay the interest on their mortgages and make a profit because of the low price of coffee, and plantations have deteriorated since 1930, when the coffee market fell 50 percent. The price was increased almost 80 percent when the quota system was introduced for the crop of 1941, but the cost of production has more than doubled and the growers really make less now than in pre-war days, the buyers state. (New York Times)

SUGAR CAPITAL REPORTED LEAVING PUERTO RICO. At least six large Puerto Rican sugar interests have acquired some 100,000 acres in the Lake Okechobee district of Florida, and the Fellsmere Sugar Co., already operating in Florida, has also been acquired by Puerto Rican capital. This migration of capital is said to be due to "intensified governmental regulation of the sugar industry in Puerto Rico." (The Journal of Commerce)

PUERTO RICAN RUM FOR U. S. TO BE LIMITED. Production of rum in Puerto Rico in 1944 is to be limited by the War Production Board to 7,300,000 gallons, or the total of exports and local consumption in 1943, recent reports indicate. Economic Stabilization Director Byrnes is expected to announce shortly his agreement to the order. The Puerto Rican export law permits shipments in bottles only. (The Journal of Commerce)

SOURCE OF ORINOCO RIVER DISCOVERED. Ground parties surveying the air discovery of the source of the Orinoco River made last fall by AAF Maj. Art Williams report that the source is in a gorge deep in jungles separating Brazil and Venezuela. The source has been long sought. A border change of the two countries may be necessary. (Christian Science Monitor)

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CASHEW NUTS PROVING VALUABLE IN INDUSTRY. In the shells of cashew nuts is found the most economical source of phenols in plant life. These phenols are being used extensively in the phenol-formaldehyde type of resins as a friction-fortifying agent in brake linings. Another use of the cashew nut shell liquid is as a mutual solvent which in relatively small quantities permits solubilizing in kerosene the derris extract to produce rotenone for insecticides. By concerted efforts of collecting and by mechanical shelling, the potential supply of cashew nuts in Brazil, the West Indies, and Central America is said to be many times the 4,000 tons produced there during 1943. The crop from India is estimated at 40,000 tons annually, and Southeast Africa has exported as much as 40,000 tons in 1 year to Indian ports. (The Journal of Commerce)

CONGO JUTE TO BE USED IN BINDER TWINE. Jute which has been imported from the Congo under a U. S. Government guarantee will be mixed with agave in binder twine. In maintaining the price of binder twine to the farmer, the U. S. Government is continuing to absorb a loss on the jute. The amount of the subsidy on Congo jute is not known, but importers believe it involves a smaller Government loss than was sustained when cotton was used. (The Journal of Commerce)

COFFEE IMPORTS AT PACIFIC PORTS LARGE. Imports of coffee at Pacific coast ports during 1943 are reported to be 2,449,854 bags. This was the largest import movement of coffee for any year since 1923. (The Journal of Commerce)

SUPPLIES OF BURLAP FOR BAGS HELD ADEQUATE. Reports from reliable quarters indicate that the supply of burlap this year may be some 70 or 75 percent of the amount of burlap used in average pre-war times. (The Journal of Commerce)

FIBER FROM SOYBEANS. An industrial company has demonstrated the making of fiber from soybeans. This fiber can be blended with cotton or wool or used by itself for various fabrics and other textiles. (The Journal of Commerce)

BRAZIL BANK LOANS MONEY TO BUY SURPLUS RICE FOR BRITAIN. President Getulio Vargas recently authorized one of the largest financial operations ever negotiated between the Banco Brasil and one State. The Banco Brasil has loaned to the State of Rio Grande do Sul \$3,500,000 to facilitate the purchase by that State for shipment of the nation's rice surplus to Britain, under an agreement signed between the U. S. and Brazil last December. Some of the money will be used to increase land acreage for rice planting and to purchase modern machinery. (New York Times)

BRAZIL LARGEST SUPPLIER OF GOODS TO ARGENTINA. Brazilian shipments to Argentina increased from 17.8 percent (in 1942) to 20.6 percent (in 1943) of total Argentine imports. Exports from the U. S. to Argentina dropped from 31.4 percent of Argentina's total imports (in 1942) to 19 percent (in 1943). British percentages were 18.2 in 1942 and 20.6 in 1943. The Brazilian gain is understood to result from that country's ability to export manufactured articles. (The Journal of Commerce)

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RAILWAY LINK BETWEEN ARGENTINA AND CHILE RESTORED. Last week direct railway communication between Mendoza, Argentina, and Valparaiso, Chile, was resumed after being closed for over 10 years. On January 11, 1934, a flood washed away many miles of the road, and the repair has only recently been completed. (New York Times)

COLOMBIA'S COFFEE SALES QUOTA MET. On March 15 the sales quota of Colombian coffee for 1943-44 under the Inter-American Coffee Agreement was completed. This means that similar developments in some of the other mild-producing countries may be expected. However, everything possible will be done to make available for the U. S. market the supplies remaining after the quotas have been met. (The Journal of Commerce)

MEXICAN EXPORTS SHOW PRODUCTION OF WAR MATERIALS. The increase of Mexico's export volume from \$138,000,000 in 1942 to \$213,000,000 in 1943 reflects the production of strategic materials. Mexico's agricultural exports include henequen and other fibers and rubber. (The Journal of Commerce)

MIDDLE AMERICA HAS HIGH COCOA PRODUCTION. Since the fall of other supply sources of cocoa in the Far East, lower Middle America is increasing its acreage of cocoa trees. In Costa Rica, for example, cocoa acreage has been increased from the 35,000 acres of 1922 to 75,000. Only 10 percent of the land suitable for cocoa production is said to be utilized at the present time. The yields have also been increased from 2 to 3 pounds of bean pods per tree to new records of 6 to 7 pounds. (New York Times)

NICARAGUA BUILDS THREE BIG ROADS. Three highways are in process of construction in Nicaragua at an estimated cost of \$10,000,000. One is to extend from the interior to the Atlantic, a second from Managua to the northern Departments, and the third is the Nicaraguan section of the Inter-American Highway. (New York Times)

QUOTA ON CANE BEVERAGE SPIRITS BRINGS PROTEST FROM PUERTO RICO. The quota for Puerto Rico's production of cane beverage spirits for 1944 has been set at 7,300,000 proof gallons by the WPB. The announcement brought a protest from Gov. Rexford G. Tugwell, on the grounds that the unemployment resulting from such limitation of production would have a "dangerous effect" upon the Island's "rehabilitation and relief program which Puerto Rico must support from rum revenues since direct Congressional appropriations for relief have been discontinued." (The Journal of Commerce)

LATIN AMERICAN COUNTRIES PRODUCING OWN TOYS. Last year a toy factory was established in Guatemala City and is now producing about 2,000 wooden toys monthly. From Nicaragua several Nicaraguan girls are to be sent to Mexico to learn doll-making. These new industries are designed to supply toys, the importation of which has been cut off by the war, and to give employment to many girls in a profitable industry. (New York Times and Export Trade and Shipper)

EXPERIMENTAL WORLD ORGANIZATION CONFERENCE BEING HELD. Representatives of American and British colonies in the Caribbean, with observers from Netherland and French possessions, are meeting in conference in Bridgetown, Barbados, British West Indies, during the latter part of March. The conference will consider the general development of the colonies. The President of the American Section of the American-British Caribbean Commission describes the conference as "an experiment in a new type of world organization." (Christian Science Monitor)